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Ruth's Apricot Easter

Daisy D. Stephenson

HERE was no getting round the fact that it had been a horrid day. First, there was that surprise test in "math" on those awful stocks and bonds. Ruth Avery was positive she had flunked it, and this would cut down her class record so she would never, never attain the Olympian heights of the Junior High Honor Roll.

Then during "gym" period she played basketball so hard that she fell flat, tearing the knee of her stocking. Whereupon that superior Coralie Lorne had laughed. Coralie, whose dainty dresses, immaculate middies and carefully pleated bloomers were the despair of less fortunate classmates.

"I only wish she had to wear stockings that are just one darn hitched onto another, and tacky made-over bloomers, for one month," thought Ruth bitterly, as, flushed with injured pride, she hurried to her locker for the book review she had done the night before.

"Now where—" Ruth tumbled the contents of the small locker upside down, right-side left, with no visible success. "I'm sure I put it in my Latin. Oh, dear! Miss Frink will have a fit."

She was a minute late and, moreover, she had no neat, carefully-penned paper to hand the English teacher. Her stammered excuse brought forth a cold criticism concerning the insidious habit of carelessness. Miss Frink, Ruth felt, had never lost nor mislaid a thing in her whole life.



WHAT EASTER BRINGS

Easter, time of holy things, ♦
Setting free of secret springs
Of life and love and art; ♦♦
Messages in opening flowers
Promises in gentle showers, ♦
A stir in every heart. ♦♦♦

Song birds in the budding trees
Scents of spring on every breeze
The earth once more made new.
So may happiness and health
Their renewing power & wealth
Bring Easter joys to you. ♦ ♦

D.S.E.

Ruth's carefree locker mate chased her with a laughing apology and a Latin book from whose leaves fluttered the missing book review. But that could not undo forty minutes' misery.

Then after school the girls of the second division were assembled by the Music Teacher, pretty Miss Logan.

"Girls," she began eagerly, "I'm very proud of your singing and I want other people to hear it. I've been requested to train a chorus for Easter Sunday. You will sing for the morning services of the Community Church. In the afternoon at the Children's Hospital, perhaps later at another place. Cars will be furnished to

new till she pays the Doctor and that won't be before May."

Such disagreeable and hopeless thoughts raced through Ruth's head as the girls rehearsed the lilting song of spring, each time with growing confidence as the melody became more familiar.

"Sweet bells of the lily and hyacinth ring,
For lo! it is Easter, and lo! it is Spring!"

"I think Easter is the happiest time, don't you?" murmured sweet flaxen-haired Joyce who stood next to Ruth.

take you around and return you to your homes."

The girls were radiating willing approval and Coralie Lorne inquired anxiously, "Does that mean we'll have to wear white, Miss Logan? Because I have a new orchid crepe with a hat to match and —"

Quickly Miss Logan reassured the troubled one concerning this ever-important subject to all femininity.

"I like the idea of different colors much better than all white," she declared positively. "You will look like spring flowers in your pretty blue and pink or green or yellow dresses. Whatever you and your mothers had planned will be perfectly all right."

It was at this point that Ruth Avery's heart dropped with an almost audible thud. "Oh, goodness! That four-year-old apricot that everybody knows me by!" she groaned inwardly. "I won't wear it. I won't. And mother said only yesterday that she couldn't get me anything

"Of course, Christmas is the jolliest, but somehow, I like Easter just as well. When the robins came back to our apple tree last week I felt like hugging them. And when the first crocus blooms or the first jonquil, I'm just like mother, — I want to sing all the time."

Ruth squeezed the little girl's hand. Joyce was a dear, and she wasn't always talking about clothes like the rest of them. Joyce was almost as short on new things as Ruth. Only Joyce had a big sister who worked and wanted her little sister to look as nice as other girls.

When the practice ended, the girls skipped off, chattering about new coats or hats or dresses, for that is what Easter meant to them. Ruth lingered, and, prompted by something she did not try to explain, told Miss Logan shyly, "Please don't count on me this time, for I might not be here Easter."

"But Ruth, I always count on your voice to lead," cried Miss Logan warmly. "I shall certainly miss you, Ruth, but of course, if you can't be with us, I'll understand."

Ruth felt a sort of lump in her mind as she hurried past neat bungalows and more spacious brick homes to the outskirts of town where older houses were more scattered and less neighborly besides being forlorn in general appearance.

Not that she was concerned about the old frame house that needed a new spring coat and bonnet, if new shingles may come under so frivolous a heading. No, in spite of her usually cheery disposition to make the best of things, Ruth felt indigo blue and saw — apricot! The dress had come three Easters before in a periodical box from Aunt Agatha in Texas. Cousin Edith had not worn it long and it was a pretty peach color. The material, Ruth's mother observed gratefully, was a very good quality of silk crepe. In it, Ruth, with her glossy black curls and pink-and-white complexion had looked "like a peach," their old neighbor, Mr. Tully, had declared admiringly.

Mr. Tully had a novelty shop downtown, and many a fascinating toy had he brought Ruth in past years. As she entered the sagging gate, she cast a regretful glance at the little green cottage down the road. Its windows were bare; it wore a deserted look. Kind Mr. Tully, due to the fact that he had lost his wife the previous fall, had sold out and was leaving for Oregon. Ruth had told him good-bye that morning. That, in fact, had been the beginning of her horrid day. She would miss the bald, little, big-hearted neighbor.

"Mr. Tully left something for you," Ruth's mother greeted her. "He said he hoped you would get some fun out of it."

"Where is it?" demanded Ruth. It was behind the door and Ruth fell upon it with a little gurgle of laughter. It

The Call of God

BY L. D. STEARNS

April! *The stone is rolled aside!*

The terror of Death is past!

New hope is springing and stirring;

Life's pulses beat strong and fast;

New force from earth's heart is bounding;

The lily — the bursting pod —

The blood-red rose — the soul of man —

Alike hear the call of God.

looked like nothing much but an oblong box to which was attached a handle. But Ruth understood the mystery of unfolding it, this way and that, until presto! it was a tiny organ such as the Salvation Army used for services at city street corners. Like a toy with its miniature keyboard, you had to pump the pedals and work the wire knee swell for dear life, or your tune would die with a wheeze.

But Mr. Tully had taught Ruth how to bring music out of it, and though she had taken few lessons, the girl was a natural-born musician. Very shortly she was pumping away, singing school songs with the day's worries forgotten.

But when she told mother about the chorus, the apricot ogre had to be faced. Mrs. Avery persuaded Ruth to bring it out for critical inspection. Ruth held it at arm's length as if it might bite her, and for a long moment neither said a word. Then out of her boundless optimism Ruth's mother began, "Well, really, dear, it isn't so bad. That spot where the Rogers boy spilled his chocolate soda on you doesn't show much, and now that sashes are back in style —"

"Oh, mother!" wailed Ruth, "it looks as old and made-over as if Noah's little girl had worn it! It's not apricot to me, it's plain 1-lemon! All the other girls are having pretty new dresses and I told Miss Logan not to count on me. If I have to wear the old rag on Easter it will just spoil everything."

"I painted that faded spring hat the prettiest yellow," announced Mrs. Avery tactfully. "With some loops of fresh ribbon it will look like new." Then consolingly, "Never mind, dear. The Doctor says I'm gaining so fast I can go back to the office next week. And you shall have the prettiest rose summer dress you ever saw, the minute I can get it."

"Oh, I don't mind, mother!" Ruth gave her back her smile gallantly. "But I sort of wish I was a tree. They never have to worry. They're always sure to have new green leaves! Oh, I suppose I'll sing if I have to but I do wish we could unroll a magic carpet and go sailing away somewhere. Some strange place where people don't all have new Easter things."

After a few days of facing the inevitable, it did seem as if old-time magic bobbed up to make Ruth's wish come true.

"I broke my sewing machine," wrote Aunt Polly from Flying-L Ranch. "And I need a churn. So Jim is driving the new car down Friday the fifteenth and I want you and Ruth to come back with him without fail. The little church on the hill is to be dedicated, and the whole community will attend. I'm hungry to see you, and it's the finest chance. Besides, I need Ruth's help in decorating the church, and yours in preparing Sunday dinner for fourteen."

Well, Ruth was so excited she yearned to be a boy long enough to get a flock of hand-springs out of her system. Singing gaily, she packed her Christmas hatbox, and without a word she folded in the apricot dress. When Uncle Jim made for the hills Saturday morning he carried something besides two passengers, their luggage, Aunt Polly's churn and so on.

After the car was unpacked at the ranch porch, Aunt Polly stopped hugging her sister and Ruth long enough to exclaim, "What on earth is in that queer-looking box?" Ruth bubbled over gleefully.

"That," said Uncle Jim, winking at Ruth, "is our Easter music. It has the nicest tunes inside. You can't judge by the way it looks. I happened to mention that our only singer had a cold and lost her voice, and that we hadn't any organ yet. Just wait, Polly, till we tote that old box over to the church yonder, and you'll be surprised."

She was, and so was everybody, including the young minister who rode ten hilly miles on horseback to be present. For besides the simple hymns in which the happy congregation joined so heartily, there was an Easter solo by a black-haired, bright-faced visitor in a charming apricot-hued dress.

Never was there a more joyous, sincere service than that which dedicated the little stone church among the evergreens. Outside, the squirrels frisked among the pines, peeping in curiously, while bluejay and wren and grosbeak added their rapturous notes to the songs of the country folk who lifted grateful hearts and voices on high that sunny April morning.

"My, I wish I could sing as you do!" a shy girl neighbor told Ruth adoringly as they took the trail to Aunt Polly's for dinner. Then, encouraged by Ruth's flashing smile she added, "And that's the prettiest dress I ever saw, too. What color do you call it?"

Ruth dimpled. "Apricot," she replied.

It was late that afternoon before she found a chance to share the joke with her mother. Then, after mutual laughter, Ruth confided earnestly, "But I've decided Easter isn't the way you look. It's the way you feel, isn't it, mother? I never once thought about my old dress. I just felt so happy and Easterly clear through, I had to sing!"

Savino's Chance

BY MARION CUSHMAN FLAGG

KLITHROE DEAN laid down her violin none too gently and turning quickly around met the expectant expression of her mother's face. "Mother, dear, I can read your mind. I know what you are going to ask and the answer is — Yes. After five long years of practicing, Mrs. Davenport thinks that I play well enough to give a leading solo at the musicale to be held in High School Hall."

"I trust that you are as proud as I am," replied Mrs. Dean.

"I am more ashamed than proud," declared Klithroe impetuously. "Ever since I was nine years old it has been a dreary round of scales and exercises with a few 'pieces' to keep up my courage, but more to keep up appearances. It is not worth while. Why should any one think I could play a violin? None of our family is musical. Father is just interested in business. All he reads is the *Business Accuracy Magazine*, and certainly brother Tom —

"That's just the trouble," interrupted Mrs. Dean. "We need music. I'm weary of reports, budgets, and estimates. Your father thinks in figures, — figures! It is a comfort to think my daughter is going to bring the charm of music into the home."

"Mother, I am afraid you will be disappointed. Do you know what I wish?"

The girl spoke eagerly and Mrs. Dean looked up quickly, thinking that she was going to ask for some new ornament, though now she possessed more than other girls her age.

"I wish," continued Klithroe, "that Savino Brent could have my chance. His father took good care of our flower gardens, and since he died Savino has worked in Gray's grocery store. Penny by penny, he has saved up enough to buy a violin. Though he takes no lessons he can play the sweetest music — all the old-time melodies, and his mother has taught him some of the airs from her native country, Italy."

"It would be fine if Savino could have music lessons, but he is working to pay off the mortgage which your father holds on their cottage," replied the mother.

"Why couldn't father let them have the cottage?" pleaded Klithroe.

"Some day you will learn, my daughter, that figures are relentless — cruel. They are the treacherous rocks on the shores of business and many a dream cottage with roses over the doorway has been lost on their jagged points; and so it is with Mrs. Brent's cottage. Mr. Brent had hoped to make up all the payments this year, but his long illness took all the money. We helped with the funeral expenses and now — well, I suppose the cottage belongs to us."

"No," remonstrated Klithroe; "Father shall not claim their home. I am sure he will see how brave and true Savino is and perhaps, too, we can find some way for him to have music lessons."

As a little girl, Klithroe remembered the kind gardener who always saved the first moss rose for her; now it seemed the roses were not so royal, nor the larkspur so blue since his radiant face was no longer bending over them. From her window, early in the morning, she saw his son, one year older than herself, taking his father's place as best he could, and then starting off to work that he might earn for his mother the necessities of life and some of the comforts.

Savino's mother was preparing breakfast in the little cottage at the garden's edge. The glorious Spring sunshine was streaming in the windows and reflecting its glory from the bowl of marigolds she had placed in the center of the table. She chatted gaily of other days, telling Savino about her girlhood in Italy, her coming to America, her work in the mills, and how one happy day she became the bride of an American citizen. How proud she was! He had brought her to the cottage at the garden's edge, and told her that some day it would be their very own.

So interested did she become in her story that it was a few minutes before she noticed the white envelope at her plate.

"What is this, Savino, — an early morning mail?" she asked.

"Two tickets for Mrs. Davenport's violin recital," answered Savino. "Klithroe gave them to me last night when I was in the garden watering the plants. You will be my guest tonight at the musicale, Mother?"

A good-bye kiss was her answer, but he knew what it meant and went away, whistling a merry tune.

An evening's entertainment was a treat in Mrs. Brent's life and she spent a busy

day in preparation. While her hands were busy mending and pressing she was planning a special treat for supper — a real theater supper, she would call it. Six o'clock came very soon; the tarts were on the table, the fruit salad arranged in individual glasses and she was taking some feathery rolls from the oven when the door opened and a boyish voice exclaimed. "Pretty fine eats, tonight, Ma. Folks usually have their feast after the show, but we are going to have ours first."

After supper Savino donned a big apron and took care of the "ruins," as he called them.

When Mrs. Brent, in her own room, fastened the creamy lace on the black silk against her soft white throat, she felt more the thrill of "going out" than she thought ever would be hers again. After the work was finished down stairs, she heard the sweet, liquid notes of the violin coming through the hall. Memories came to her of the day when her five-year-old son had teased his father for "stringed music," as he called it, and his father had told him that if he practiced faithfully he should go to his mother's country and take lessons of a master. The childish hands had clapped in glee. Those were memories now. How differently the years had woven their story of self-sacrifice and toil!

There was a brave smile on her face as she descended the stairs and said jokingly, "I think Mrs. Davenport will be pleased with one of her pupils this evening."

"We will have the critic's seat, Mother; and who knows, Mrs. Davenport may need a substitute."

In good spirits they locked the cottage door and walked down the avenue towards High School Hall. Entering the hall, they were ushered to a seat well up front; opposite, on the other side, were the Dean family, Mr. and Mrs. Dean and on the end of the seat Klithroe's brother, Tom.

Behind closed doors at the side of the stage came the sounds of tuning instruments, then the doors opened and the hopeful musicians came trooping on the stage. Klithroe had a seat with the first violins; she was fresh from the hands of the modiste and Madame Laselle's beauty parlor. If they could only put music into her finger tips!

As the clock struck eight, Mrs. Davenport held aloft her baton and the several instruments of the orchestra responded as one. It was as though a waterfall was tumbling over a mighty precipice; quieter levels were reached and the program followed in a quick succession of rondos, caprices, melodies, refrains, serenades and dances. Savino saw, near the end of the program, "Klithroe Dean — Gypsy Dance — Nabez."

Magic of April

BY MARJORIE DILLON

Oh, April is a month of charms!

Of April I am fond,
Because she has a wondrous touch,
She bears a magic wand.

She waves it over field and fen,
And over wood and lea,
And presto! beauty wakes to life
To gladden you and me.

Such dainty things as April calls!
Wee buttercups of gold,
Blue violet and lacy fern,
And tulips, flaming, bold.

And when the world is all a-bloom,
You hear the lilies chime,
For April's mission is fulfilled
In joyous Easter-time.

Klithroe was marking the number in doubtful anticipation. She was pleased to see Savino and his mother in the audience and for their sakes and her own family she would like to do well. Harry Swartz came just before her and would be recalled, she thought, for he was an acknowledged violin player and had been taking lessons since he was five years old.

Her head began to ache and she looked up at the windows to see if they were open. They were not. Where was the janitor? She could not play unless she had fresh air. Her seat was near the partition of the stage. If only she might move her chair she could reach out and open the door which led to the rear exit. It seemed as though she were choking, stifling, but no, she must just be nervous. Ivan Leroy sat next her and whispered in her ear, "I smell smoke and I hope the place burns up before I have to play."

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself," replied Klithroe; "this room is only close." The suggestion that Ivan put into her head, and fear, gave her courage for one more attempt. With difficulty she moved her chair near enough to reach the knob and pull the door open.

Instead of cool, reviving air, dense smoke filled the passageway. Her first thought was to go out quietly, closing the door behind her, and give the alarm. A tongue of flame, fanned by the draught, licked the door casing and mounted to the ceiling; there needed to be no other alarm. Panic-stricken faces turned in horror. Mothers rushed to save their children and others bolted for the front exits. There was confusion and tumult.

The fire had started from a defective wire in the rear outside corner of the building. A still alarm had been given and fire apparatus was almost at the scene, but not before the frightened au-



"Under the sweet strains of music the hall was emptied quickly."

dience had trampled on each other in trying to go in both directions.

As quick as thought Klithroe had come down to where Savino stood with his mother, "Play, Savino, play," she pleaded, as she pressed her violin into his hand.

"I shall be all right," Mrs. Brent said bravely; "do as Klithroe asks."

Savino stood on a chair in the center of the room and in a moment, when panic seemed imminent, the beautiful old Italian airs came from the violin, the

trampling footsteps softened, and the onrush toward the doors became a more orderly retreat. Music helped unreasoning minds to reason.

Police had been trying to tell the people that the fire was confined to the back of the hall and the front entrances were still safe. Would it be safe for Savino? Anxiety filled her mind. Mr. Dean came quickly to Klithroe's side and guided Mrs. Brent and his daughter to safety, while Tom looked after his mother.

Under the sweet strains of music the hall was emptied quickly. Though the smoke was dense, Savino could gain the front entrance by crawling on the floor. A cheer from the crowd outside greeted him as he came into the fresh air.

"Good work, my boy," said Mr. Dean earnestly, as he escorted Mrs. Brent and her son to the waiting limousine and made a place for them with his family. After the all-out signal sounded, their car, with many others, headed towards home. As the car drew up in front of the little cottage at the garden's edge, Klithroe overheard her father say to Mrs. Brent: "If it is convenient for you to come to my office tomorrow morning I have a legal document for you." When the car started again, Klithroe asked, "Daddy, did you mean the deed of the cottage?" "Yes," replied the father; "I have been watching Mrs. Brent and Savino, and their bravery has earned their home and music lessons as soon as I can arrange for them."

"I knew you would do it. Business isn't always a rock on which dream cottages are lost. There just needs to be a lighthouse of kindness standing near, and you are the lighthouse, Daddy."

"But it needs boys and girls like you and Savino to keep the light burning brightly," replied the father — then they alighted at their own beautiful home.

The Cat and the Captain

BY ELIZABETH COATSWORTH

CHAPTER II



About five o'clock the Captain came home. He was not a big man but he carried a very big umbrella. He had wrinkles around his eyes from looking long distances, and he walked as though the street were going up and down under him, because he had spent so much of his time on the decks of boats. Everyone loved the Captain the moment they saw him because he was so kind and so jolly. The Cat loved him too, but took a naughty pride in not showing it, except sometimes

when they were alone together. Then he would jump on the Captain's knee and rub his head against the Captain's chin, and go to sleep curled in the hollow of his arm. And how careful the Captain would be not to move! They understood each other very well, and the Captain used to say that he had never shipped with a better shipmate than his black cat. But today the Cat was in a bad humor, as he walked out from under the verandah.

"Well, well! there you are, hey?" said the Captain, and he opened the door and waited for the Cat to go in. But the Cat only looked at him. He was being provoking.

"Don't you want to come in?" asked the Captain.

The Cat still looked at him.

"All right," said the Captain. "If you won't, you won't, my lad," and he started to shut the door.

But before he could get it shut, the Cat came in.

It was a curious room, though neither the Cat nor the Captain thought so. It was both living-room and dining-room. There was a big fireplace of red brick with a Dutch oven to one side, and there were hooked rugs on the floor, some of them with designs of harbors or lighthouses on them, clean but faded. On the walls hung compasses and sea-charts, and round glass balls (used to float fishing-nets) hung in the windows like big blue-and-white bubbles. A model of the Captain's first ship, the *Foam Flower*, spread its sails high on the mantel-piece beyond reach of the Cat. There was a little boat, too, made in a bottle, though it was a mystery how the masts and rigging ever got through the neck, and there were two pink conch shells from the West Indies. In the window hung Jericho, the parrot. Poor Jericho had died a long

le ago, before the Cat was so much as n, but the Captain was fond of him, I couldn't bear to think of looking up d not seeing Jericho in his place. Se he him stuffed and there he still hung in cage. Once a week Susannah opened door of the cage and took Jericho and carefully dusted him. And sannah kept all the brass in the room ning brightly — the Captain was very eticular about that. But neither the ptain nor Susannah noticed that sometimes a few crumbs were left under the ole. Only the Cat knew it. When the ptain sat down and lit his pipe, the t sat down too, but instead of jumping into his chair opposite the Captain, sat on the floor and watched the mbs. It was very still except for the k-tock-ticking of the cuckoo clock and e steps of Susannah getting supper dy in the kitchen. The Cat never rred. After a long while, something ed along the edge of the floor, something ran out on the carpet, something gan to nibble a crumb.

Before you could have said "Jack robinson!" the Cat had that mouse by e neck.

The door into the kitchen was open a tle, so in walked the Cat and dropped e mouse at Susannah's feet. Some ts think that a mouse makes a nice esent for the person they love, but this t knew how Susannah felt about mice. "Help! Fire! Murder! Police!" yelled sannah, climbing on to a kitchen chair a fast as she could scramble.

"Why, what's the trouble?" asked the Captain, stumping into the kitchen in a great hurry.

"He's a-clamberin' up the chair!" yelled Susannah. "He's a-clamberin' up the chair!"

The mouse was far wiser than that. He had run back to his hole like lightning. But the Captain had to look under the chair, and up the chair-legs and then take a candle and hunt in all the corners of the kitchen before Susannah would come down. Even then she was very much upset. Said she to the Captain, "Boss, if I had a cat like this yere one, I wouldn't have him long!" and she began singing:

"I'se known a heap of bad eats,
But he's the worstest I'se known.
If he was mine, I'd take him to the
gyarden
And bury him like a bone —
Like a bone, like a bone, jus' like a
wicked ol' bone!"

"He's really a good Cat at heart," said the Captain sadly, for he always wanted the Cat and Susannah to be friends. He couldn't understand why they didn't get on better, and he scolded the Cat a little when they sat in their chairs by the fire. But the Cat treated the whole thing as an accident, and stretched his paws and looked at the Captain with big sleepy eyes and purred to himself as he listened to Susannah singing crossly in the kitchen.

(To be continued)

A Springtime Flower Gem

By Alvin M. Peterson

OME wild flowers appear strong and sturdy while others seem frail and delicate. We have but to compare the bluebell and columbine with the violets and Solomon's seal to have is strikingly illustrated. The lovely dutchman's breeches is one of our frail, delicate wild flowers, its daintiness being due to its pretty white flowers, its feathery, fern-like leaves and its long slender petioles and flower stalks. Some wild flowers we pluck, feeling quite sure from the start that they will not but will last a long time, and still more important, at by picking them we all not be helping to exterminate them. Others we hesitate to touch for fear we all mar their beauty. Surely, they will wilt before we can get them home, and perhaps there will be none of them to greet us another spring. Would that every one, everywhere, would study and admire the beautiful Dutchman's

breeches, but would refrain from picking it. Then, others, in years to come, would be able to enjoy the finding of this rare springtime gem.

The Dutchman's breeches belongs to the fumitory family of wild flowers and is closely related to another dainty little wild flower, the squirrel corn. It is an early flower, blossoming in April and May, along with the bloodroot, rue and



wood anemones, spring beauty, and adder's tongues. It can hardly compete in earliness with that hardy beauty, the hepatica, and is quite outclassed by the rugged, unlovely skunk cabbage. As a rule, it is to be found on rocky hillsides, where there are a good many trees and the soil is rich. Its leaves disappear by midsummer, when the trees about it are in full leaf.

The two most noticeable things about this plant are its feathery, fern-like leaves, which one might pick as an addition to any bouquet, and its odd white pantaloons-like blossoms. The leaves are compound, being composed of three leaflets which in turn are divided into three parts. There are from four to nine of the odd flowers fastened to the flower-stalk by short stems, and reminding one of tiny inverted pantaloons hung in a row on a line to dry. Each flower has four petals, two of which form the legs of the imaginary breeches, in which the nectar is found, and two smaller ones opposite these which partly inclose the stamens and pistil. The root of the plant is composed of a number of closely clustered bulbs from which the leaves and flowers spring.

The Dutchman's breeches is known by a number of different names, such as ear-drops, white hearts, boys and girls, and soldier's cap. The name ear-drops no doubt refers to the fact that the blossoms look like certain ear jewels, while the name "boys and girls" refers to the resemblance the flowers have to boys and girls hanging in a row along a cross bar in a gymnasium, kicking their heels in the air. And the blossoms do look a little like white hearts and soldier's caps. This wild flower differs from squirrel corn in having leg-like wide-spreading spurs instead of rounded ones, in having clusters of bulbs instead of round tubers along the roots, and in preferring rocky hillsides to rich woodlands. Squirrel corn also is a more northern and later plant, blossoming in May and June instead of in April and May.

Spring Is Here

BY ELSA GORHAM BAKER

Bluebird sits on a topmost twig
Singing his song, so soft and clear;
Telling the news to small and big —
Spring, sweet Spring is here!

Down by the brookside, alders stand
Waving their catkin flags with cheer;
Frogs in the marsh — a noisy band —
Tell us Spring is here!

Where there's a sheltered, sun-warmed
spot,
Pale blue violet buds appear;
Winter weather is now forgot —
Spring, sweet Spring is here!

The Easter Messengers

BY GEORGIA STENGER

JESSIE sat on the doorstep waiting to see her father ride into sight. He could be seen for a long way over the wide prairie where Jessie's home was. As she looked for him, she noticed the sun looked sullen and gloomy on its way down the sky. There was a mistiness all about, too.

"Maybe it will rain and then we can't have our Easter Sunday school," thought Jessie. For this was Easter Eve, and a meeting was to be held of several of the little prairie Sunday schools. Word had been carried to all, "Please bring flowers."

But for days and days it had been so hot, even in this early springtime. The prairie flowers had bloomed such warped blossoms, and so soon wilted, that where flowers were to come from Jessie could not tell. The water courses were drying up and the hot winds blew.

"Flowers!" thought Jessie. "Who could find a flower on that stony and hard-baked old Jordan road? Or in the arroyo, — maybe an old draggled fern by the spring, or a piece of scrub mesquite. Lots of cactus, though. Wouldn't I look funny hauling in a big pine cushion by its root in my new Easter dress? There's father!" Nearer and nearer the dot came until she could hear him whistle —

"It may not be my way, it may not be thy way,
But yet in His own way, the Lord will provide."

Sundown's duties were over. Timmy had gone to bed, mother was tired, and there was nothing for Jessie to do when the oil lamp was lighted. Her father was fitting some straps, and the gloom seemed to settle on everything outdoors and in.

"Do you think it will rain, father?" asked Jessie, again and again.

"No, that's nothing but heat lightning. No rain, Jessie. And the grass has about given out."

"Father," she asked later, "did you see any flowers anywhere?"

"I'm afraid not; if I did, I was not thinking of them."

The air was very warm. "I'll take my pallet out onto the gallery and watch the clouds," thought Jessie.

The thunder was growling a little bit as Jessie kissed her good-nights and made up her pallet outside. Soon she went to sleep. In the night she heard her father up, and a blast of wind nearly blew her down as she grabbed up the pallet and ran in the door. Then a sharp flash, then a rattle of great thunders, then calm until a blast of wind again. At last came a hard gust, shaking the house. The mother came running into the sit-

ting-room and the father gathered both her and Jessie close, fearing the house would be torn from its wooden piers. Suddenly water poured like a flood over the roof. It swept down into the water barrels: rushes of water, then splashes against the door.

"There will be no Easter now," said the mother.

"And no flowers," said Jessie, as she cuddled up to her mother in the bed.

But the sun was up before she was, shining like a freshly scoured golden dish. The whole world had had a good washing and already the warmth was creeping inside. While Jessie was eating breakfast she looked out the window. "Oh!" she cried. She jumped up from the table, ran out the door, out the gate and up the road, stooping every now and then and again running.

"What is it, Jessie?" called father.

"Oh, father, my father, the world is full of lovely rain lilies, beautiful white rain lilies! Now I shall have my Easter offering."

And so it was. Dotted over the dark road and into the brush were the large white lilies of the desert lands, — wonderfully beautiful flowers like small Easter lilies. When the earth is dry and hot and hard, they cannot push their pale blue stems up. But after a downpour, in a single night, they spring into the light, bringing cheer to the lonely stony ground.

"Father, this is almost a miracle. It looks like the manna of the wilderness."

Father just whistled,

"It may not be my way, it may not be thy way,
But yet in His own way, the Lord will provide."



THE BOOKSHELF

Books suggested by Miss Elsie L. Lustig

This week I am going to have the fun of beginning with a book that is written by an author who is herself a contributor to *The Beacon*. The book is called RAINBOW BOY, and several of these "Heart-of-a-Poet" stories have been printed in *The Beacon*. "The Rainbow Boy sought the better things in life. He possessed the beautiful rare soul of a poet and his mental curiosity kept him on the search for the higher values of life. In his search he found courtesy, kindness, industry, reverence, and love. At the end of his rainbow he found himself a real boy using each one of these virtues to make a good character in keeping with his heart of a poet."

In the "Foreword" we learn that Rainbow Boy was lonesome, for he had no one at all to play with. His real happiness came only when his mother told him stories at bedtime. One day he suddenly had the idea of going for a walk and asking everything he met to tell him its story. The first one was of the little stunted tree who could never grow a thick green top, because it was so gorous that it just could not help letting hungry animals eat its new shoots, and finally sacrificed the finest one to be the fishing rod of its friend, the freckle boy. The book is full of similar interesting stories; each one very different, many of them quite adventurous. And you will like, too, the illustrations by Harold Abbott Mason.

SUE STANWOOD, by Lillian Grace Copp, is a story for girls of thirteen, fourteen, or perhaps a little older. Sue Stanwood, who is an orphan, is suddenly taken from a little Maine village to live with her Aunt Gertrude in Boston. Aunt Gertrude is very "highbrow" and cold, and poor Sue is always being suppressed in everything that she says or does. She thinks her Aunt Gertrude hates her, but when she goes back to Maine and is badly burned in a bonfire which the boys and girls have built in her honor, Aunt Gertrude is wired for and Sue finds out that her aunt has just let her heart be covered by a shell of hardness; and that she really loves her niece. Sue brings about the engagement between her aunt and a very nice man, Judge Denton, and at the end of the book the wedding has taken place, and they are going to start off for Europe — Judge Denton, Aunt Gertrude, and Sue. The book is interesting all the way through, and Sue will often have our sympathy and understanding.

RAINBOW BOY. By Hewes Lancaster. Chicago: Albert Whitman & Co.

SUE STANWOOD. By Lillian Grace Copp. Boston: L. C. Page & Co.

Trees

BY ADA CAMPBELL

The sturdy oak tree seems to me
To be a very friendly tree, —
So generously its boughs outspread,
Above a resting traveler's head.

A maple tree is friendly, too,
With thick green leaves that hide from
view,

Safe, where no preying eye can see,
A nesting bird, with fledglings wee.

But straight and tall a poplar stands,
A soldier waiting for commands.
(I saw a row of them, one day,
And almost felt they'd march away.



THE CROW'S NEST

By
WAITSTILL
HASTINGS
SHARP

Text: Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.—John 15:8.

YOU know, I think the best way to go to church, or to a concert, or to Europe is to go *prepared* — ready for the meanings of things. The richest people are those who are keen to the meaning of things. So I and you and I were sitting in some snug nook this morning just before our walk to church. We could talk together about the meaning of Easter Sunday. Easter Sunday means two kinds of things to me:

1. Faith in truth of right living.
2. Faith in the truth that other people worth our right living.

Easter Sunday each year recalls faith in the truth of right living. I think that on Easter I feel that it is the time to live a good life and that matter how old we are it is worth while to take ourselves and just make ourselves live a good life. The reason I feel this way is because I remember how us and all the greatest people in the field have lived; when we look at this greatest Life and its vast company of greater Lives we can see that *a good life is reality* — it is real — it lives forever and *does something great* long after the human body that made possible its resurrection has passed away. This wonderful feeling is what I call the truth of right living. I feel it on Easter Sunday when I sit in church and am stirred by voices from unseen mouths and as I live the church led by hands more real than ever they were in life. The good truly does live. The good is true. The good takes its everlasting place in the truth of the world. It IS worth while to live a right life.

If you have any doubt about this, think of the power of the life of Jesus Christ now, 2,000 years since, see it working for good in the lives of men. It is inspiring to think of how people's real good and their knowledge of right and wrong have grown up with their faith in Jesus' way of life. We know, by the length of this faith in our own hearts, that for almost 2,000 years millions of great choices have been made daily and millions of lives have been lifted — and because a carpenter gathered a band of fishermen together and spoke to them

about truth, and love, and faith and trust. Bad as we are, the fact that the spirit which was in Jesus is with us today — and is with us as never before — gives me faith in the truth of right living.

2. Easter Sunday means, too, that people, human beings, are *worth* our right living and *have a right* to our right living. The best proof of the real good in the heart of "the other fellow" is his hat off to brave-hearted and truthful leaders and his passion to join the ranks. When I hear a man or a woman or a girl or a boy say "That's a good man!" about a person whom I, too, admire, I feel that the fine spirit which just spoke out its admiration is the most precious thing in the world. So I join it in saying, "Bravo!" and we walk for a time together behind the stirring music of an ideal.

The very fact that my church is crowded on Easter Sunday morning — that people are singing and praying close to me in quiet worship and joyful thanks for the spirit of Jesus of Nazareth — is great proof that men and women are sound at heart and worth more of my best than any other objects in my life. The very fact that you and I and our fathers and mothers and millions of other people have been grateful and are grateful for the leadership of Jesus and the leadership of other supreme spirits and that they try to follow — even if it be afar off — is proof that people do know the best when they see it, and that they try to live the best, and that we owe them our cheer and encouragement while they are looking for the right. People have a right to our righteousness.

The Easter Spirit is the spirit of Faith in the Best. To me it means faith in the everlasting truth of right living and faith in the everlasting truth that people are worth our right living.

Good human hearts are timeless memorials to the best which we have done.

The Lady of the Rocks

BY FRANK H. SWEET

FAR out, and up, on the "barren lands" of the western plateaus of western Nevada, eastern Oregon and Idaho, grows the Mariposa lily. It shows its pretty smiling face in early April — soon after the first warm chinook winds drive the last of the winter snows from the ranges. Among the piles of shale, in rock crevices, in places where the soil is so scant as to offer sustenance to no growing thing, this beautiful flower makes its home. It brings a touch of loveliness, gives a charm, to a region that might otherwise be ugly and unattractive.

The cattlemen, accustomed as they are to life in the rough — but a life that is full of delicious freedom of the great

outdoors — manifest a genuine respect for this tiny flower among the barrens. Many a grizzled weather-bronzed cowboy has been known to doff his broad hat when the "little lady of the rocks" smiles up at him. It softens his heart, and gives assurance that the bleak north winds have been driven from the ranges — that springtime, with its velvet carpet of new-sprouting grass, has arrived, bringing succulence for hungry herds, and respite for tired riders. It induces toil-hardened men to see beauty where no beauty was seen before.

This tender little Mariposa lily has five velvety pink petals. The petals are spotted with black something like the better-known tiger lily, yet vastly different in color and form. Clusters of white hairs, as soft, as silken, as the tufts that tip the sensitive ears of a kitten, point the petals of the Mariposa. In the conservatory of a queen this "little lady of the rocks" would be a creature to admire and love. Yet no more lovely could it be than when, at the Easter-time, it smiles up from the rocks of the barren lands.

Easter Gifts

BY MARJORIE DILLON

Song and sunshine, faith and flowers,
Happy laughter ringing,
Glad beginnings, hope's fair rainbow —
Easter time is bringing.



My kitty-cat down on the ground
Looks at the cat-bird in the tree
And though they both "Meow," I've
found
How very different cats can be.
VERNA GRISIER McCULLY.



THE BEACON CLUB

THE EDITOR'S POST BOX

Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of the Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

LINCOLN ST.,
HINGHAM, MASS.

Dear Editor: I am ten years old. I should like to become a member of the Beacon Club and wear the Club button. I like to read "The Crow's Nest" very much. I go to the Unitarian Sunday school. I have a stamp book with many different kinds of U. S. stamps and a lot of foreign ones. I read the letters and enjoy them very much. I give my love to the Beacon Club.

Your friend,
JACK THOMAS.

PUTNAMVILLE, VT.

Dear Editor: I go to the Sunday school of the Church of the Messiah in Montpelier. Our minister is Mr. Nichols and my Sunday-school teacher is Miss Richardson. I am eleven years old and my home is six miles from the church. We drive to Sunday school in our car. I should like to be a member of the Beacon Club and wear its pin. I should also like to have other Beacon Club members write to me.

Very truly yours,
CHRISTINE BROWN.

RANDOLPH, VT.

Dear Editor: I am a member of the Beacon Club but have lost my pin. Would you please send me another one?

I am thirteen and would like some one to correspond with me. I have written to Avis Wilkins, who is my —. She hasn't answered yet but I suppose she hasn't had time.

I take *The Beacon* and like it very much. I have taken it for three years now, — at least, this is my third year. My cousin and friends all read mine.

Sincerely yours,
LOUISE S. WOOD.

Elizabeth Taylor (11), of 117 School St., Belmont, Mass., would also like a correspondent.

—Ed.

The Robin's Song

BY JANE IRENE MACDONALD (AGE 9)

Far, far away,
High up in a tree,
Sat Robin Red Breast one day;
"How happy I am," sang he.

"The world is so bright,
The sky is so blue,
But soon 'twill be night,
To my nest I'll be due,

To wait for the dawning,
Bringing with it the sunshine
And gladness of morning,
Then on worms I shall dine."

As he finished his song
He heard his mate
Calling him to the nest,—
"You stay with the children
While I get some rest."

Day Lamb's Adventure

BY JOHN CARL SYBENGA (AGE 10)

Once upon a time, Day Lamb, a tiny fleecy white lamb, was running along the old rickety fence of the pasture. Suddenly he stopped as he heard his mother calling him. "Baa-aa-aa," she said, "Come here."

Day Lamb quickly ran to his mother and when he looked back, he saw Mr. Wolf, the terror of the sheep camp. But Day Lamb looked again and saw that Mr. Wolf was caught in a trap.

"O Mother," he cried, "he is caught!"

Day Lamb knew that Mr. Parker had set a trap for Mr. Wolf, but Mr. Wolf was so beautiful that Day Lamb felt sorry for him. He called Pep, a faithful old collie dog, who took care of the flock, to go for Mr. Parker, so off went Pep to perform his errand.

A few minutes later Pep returned with the old man. As soon as he saw the sad face of poor Mr. Wolf, he said, "I will keep you and train you to keep guard of the sheep while Pep guards the house."

So a year later, Day Lamb was grown, but faithful old Wolf was guarding the flock. He had learned his lesson that it does not pay to steal and kill.

PUZZLERS

Enigma

I am composed of 31 letters and am quotation from the book of Genesis.

My 11, 21, 17, 18 is a public building.

My 27, 26, 30, 31 is powdered soil.

My 19, 20, 14, 15 is not thick.

My 5, 9, 28, 29 is for the foot.

My 10, 2, 16, 3 is a small garden animal.

My 6, 16, 17, 18 surrounds a garden.

My 27, 7, 13 is an engraver's plate.

My 27, 4, 8, 23, 2 means "the same."

My 12, 1, 1, 30 are much used at Easter.

My 24, 25, 22 is the way we often feed in summer.

J. W.

Weights

If Ann weighs one-eighth more than Nan
And Nan weighs one-ninth less than Ann;

If Ann weighs one-tenth less than Dan
And Dan weighs one-ninth more than Ann;

And five times twenty pounds weight he,—

What would Ann's weight less Nan's weight be?

CHARLES NEVERS HOLMES

Answers to Puzzles in No. 27

Enigma.—Kindness to Animals.

Acrostic and Anagram.—P-aul.

S-eth.

A-dam.

L-eah.

M-ary.

S-hem.

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